

Dear [Kettleman Mother Name:]

I want to thank you again for meeting with me last week and sharing your experiences. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), is committed to providing you and all the residents of Kettleman City with independent technical assistance regarding environmental health information.

As a result of my fact-finding mission to Kettleman City, U.S. EPA has contracted with Dr. Miriam Shipp, who will serve as an Environmental Health Ombudsman for your community. Dr. Shipp is a Spanish-speaking public health physician with many years of experience. I have attached her professional biography for more information on her background and experience. The role of the Kettleman Environment Health Ombudsman will be to:

1. Meet on a regular basis with groups and individuals to discuss environmental health concerns;
2. Make independent environmental health related recommendations to the community; and
3. Make independent recommendations directly to me and to other environmental regulators and public health agencies, as well as recommendations on behalf the community.

Please feel free to call Dr. Shipp with your questions about birth defects or other health concerns you believe may be related to the environment at 1-877-577-8272. A bilingual recording will allow you to leave a message with your question or concern. Please make sure to leave your phone number so that you can receive a response within 48 hours (excluding weekends). Dr. Shipp will also be coming to Kettleman where you can meet with her directly (please set up an appointment through the same number: 1-877-577-8272).

It should be noted that as the Kettleman Environment Health Ombudsman, Dr. Shipp cannot make diagnoses or otherwise practice medicine, nor can she conduct an independent health study.

The Ombudsman will lead a independent, impartial, fair and credible process that will focus on resolving your issues. Every member of Region 9 EPA will be responsible for cooperating with the Ombudsman towards this goal.

Sincerely,

Jared Blumenfeld